

COMPACT
disc
DIGITAL AUDIO
PACO 172

Verdi

La Forza del Destino

Pristine
XR

"PERHAPS THE STORY of "La Forza del Destino" is a bit lugubrious for Easter morning, but not this crackling performance straight from Milan's La Scala. Tullio Serafin meets Verdi on his own ground in the pace he sets for Maria Meneghini Callas as Leonora, Richard Tucker as Don Alvaro, Nicola Rossi-Lemeni as Padre Guardiano, Carlo Tagliabue as Don Carlo, Elena Nicolai as Preziosilla, Renato Capecchi as Fra Melitone, and Gino del Signore as Trabuco [Angel 3531-C].

This has the live sound of the Scala's mellow yet brilliant acoustics, the virtuosity of its operatic stature. Orchestra and chorus are topflight, the pacing in the inn scenes is as chameleonic as the score. As always when they are together, Callas' and Rossi-Lemeni occupy a special plane. When they appear you are not just interested, you are involved. Tucker does some superb singing, and Tagliabue rescues himself from a stodgy start to make steely sparks fly from more than swords in their last encounter. Add Nicolai's [the Italian, not the Greek Nicolaidi] volatile glint as the camp follower, Capecchi's sulky drollery as the buffo monk, and the peddler's slyness, and it adds up to a performance rich in characterization and in that reinforced, revitalized line that is the very pulse beat of Verdi. Interesting Benois sketches suggest furies and angels fighting it out."

Chicago Tribune, 10 April 1955

This recording was issued to mixed receptions in 1955. The review from the *Chicago Tribune* (above) is glowing, whilst The Gramophone's critic in May 1955 moaned about "some uneven singing here, most of it contributed by Callas. Her voice is not too steady, there is an occasional shrillness and insecurity of pitch, and often a definite wobble," though there is praise for the rest of the cast and the recording itself. Interestingly this attitude towards Maria Callas was also to be found in another British review in *The Observer*.

By the time the recording was reissued on CD in 1987 it seems British critics had come round to a new way of thinking with regard to Maria Callas: "Leonora was a role to which Callas was particularly well attuned. Leonora's ardour, sincerity, and desperate vulnerability are etched by this great artist into her every utterance. *Forza* begins with a subdued conversation and ends with the great trio and Callas is unforgettable in both." Interestingly the critic goes on to suggest: "Callas is also helped by the new digital remastering, and by CD; her voice never really sat comfortably in 1950s vinyl which bucked and jabbered at her emissions are surely as any dyed-in-the wool canary-fancier. The sound is now clear and true."

This new Pristine XR remastering further improves on the sound of this classic recording, adding new layers of warmth, depth and complexity to the sound-stage and significantly rounding out the tone of both singers and orchestra.

Andrew Rose

PACO 172
CDs 1 & 2
Acts 1, 2, 3

verdi

la forza del destino

maria callas
richard tucker
carlo tagliabue
nicola rossi-lemeni
elena nicolai

Pristine
XR

chorus & orchestra of la scala, milan
conducted by tullio serafin

emi studio recording, 1954

verdi

la forza del destino

disc one

1. Sinfonia (7:32)

ACT ONE

2. Buona notte, mia figlia (2:25)
3. Temea restasse qui fino a domani! (1:42)
4. Me pellegrina ed orfano (3:43)
5. M'aluti, signorina (0:27)
6. Ah, per sempre (7:13)
7. Vil seduttor! Infame figlia! (2:09)

ACT TWO, SCENE ONE

8. Holà, holà, holà! (1:18)
9. La cena è pronta (0:35)
10. Che vdedo! Mio fratello! (0:34)
11. Viva la guerra! (0:59)
12. Al suon del tamburo (2:41)
13. Padre Eterno Signor (3:48)
14. Viva la buona compagnia! (1:52)
15. Poich'è imberbe l'incognito (0:41)
16. Son Pereda, son ricco d'onore (2:30)
17. Sta bene (3:01)

ACT TWO, SCENE TWO

18. Sono giunta! Grazie, o Dio! (1:41)
19. Madre, pietosa Vergine (5:15)
20. Chi siete? (2:07)
21. Chi mi cerca? (1:10)
22. Infelice, delusa, reietta (11:15)
23. Il santo nome di Dio Signore (8:05)
24. La Vergine degli Angeli (3:49)

disc two

ACT THREE, SCENE ONE

1. Attenti al gioco (4:14)
2. La vita è inferno all'infelice (3:00)
3. O tu che in seno (3:18)
4. Al tradimento! (2:18)
5. All' armi! (2:19)

ACT THREE, SCENE TWO

6. Piano ... qui posi (1:36)
7. Solenne in quest' ora (4:07)
8. Morir! Tremenda cosa! (2:08)
9. Urna fatale del mio destino (2:38)
10. E s'altra prova rinvenir potessi? (2:26)

ACT THREE, SCENE THREE

11. Compagni, sostiamo (3:08)
12. Né gustare m'è dato (8:40)
13. Lorché pifferi e tamburi (1:50)
14. Qua, vivandiere, un sorso (0:31)
15. A buon mercato chi vuol comprare? (2:17)
16. Pane, pan per carità! (3:01)
17. Nella guerra è la follia (2:12)
18. Toh! Toh! Poffare il mondo! (3:59)
19. Rataplan, rataplan, della gloria (3:26)

Chorus & Orchestra of La Scala, Milan
conducted by Tullio Serafin

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CAST

Donna Leonora - Maria Callas
Don Alvaro - Richard Tucker
Don Carlo di Vargas - Carlo Tagliabue
Il Padre Guardiano - Nicola Rossi-Lemeni
Preziosilla - Elena Nicolai
Fra Melitone - Renato Capecchi
Il marchese di Calatrava - Plinio Clabassi
Curra - Rina Cavallari
Maestro Trabuco - Gino del Signore
Un alcade/Un chirurgo - Daro Caselli
Soldati/Giuscatari - Giulio Scarinci, Ottorino Bagalli

Chorus & Orchestra of La Scala, Milan
conducted by Tullio Serafin

Recorded 17-24 August 1954
Teatro alla Scala, Milan

XR remastered by Andrew Rose
Total duration: 3hr 29:57
CD1: 76:28 CD2: 57:06 CD3: 31:26

Downloads include full score, vocal score & Italian/English libretto



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PACO 172

VERDI LA FORZA DEL DESTINO (CD3)
CALLAS, TUCKER, TAGLIAPIÙE, ROSSI-LEMMI, CAPECCHI, LA SCALA, SERAFIN

verdi

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disc three

ACT FOUR, SCENE ONE

1. Fate la carità (6:19)
2. Giunge qualcuno, aprite (1:10)
3. Invano Alvaro, ti celasti al mondo (3:26)
4. Le minacce, i fieri accenti (5:30)

ACT FOUR, SCENE ONE

5. Pace, pace mio Dio! (6:19)
6. Io muoio! Confessione! (3:08)
7. Non imprecare, umiliati a Lui (5:35)

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Cover artwork based on a photograph of Maria Callas

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